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FRONTIARIAN FORGERIES

SOME TRINITARIAN FORGERIES

Some
Trinitarian Forgeries

STATED BY A
MONOTHEIST



New York
THE GRAFTON PRESS, PUBLISHERS
MCMVI

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**“Ye shall not add unto
the word
which I command you, neither
shall ye diminish from it.”**

Deut. 4 : 2.

TRINITARIAN FORGERIES

THIS book is based on the principle that the Bible is true.

The majority of Christian people believe the real doctrine of the Bible. The majority of theologians, however, teach certain errors, and accept forged Scriptures to prove them.

Christian people generally believe the truth about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: that there is one infinite God, the Father; that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; and that the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of God. This is the doctrine of the Bible. It is the doctrine that is preached when ministers of the gospel are instrumental in the conversion of sinners. It is the doctrine that conquered most of the civilized

world within three centuries of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

But heathen ideas operating against the belief in the strict oneness of God influenced some, corruption crept into the church, and there was a combination of the doctrine of many gods with the doctrine of one God. The doctrine of the trinity was decreed by worldly power, and men were *commanded* to believe it.

The real doctrine of the trinity teaches that the Father is God, and infinite; that the Son is God, and infinite; and that the Holy Ghost is God, and infinite: that each one is an infinite person, and is God. But the doctrine of the trinity also asserts that there is but one God, though warning us not to confound the persons.

The popular belief, that of the masses of Christians, really is not trinitarian. Many persons suppose they are trinitarians who believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;

but they are not trinitarians, unless they believe in three infinite persons, each of whom is equally God.

The doctrine of the trinity was forced on the Christian world by Theodosius the Great, Justinian the Great, and other persons and corrupt influences. Those who denied it were deprived of civil rights. Wicked men secured the ecclesiastical offices, as well as those of the state, and Christians who still maintained in purity the original doctrine of the unity of God, and that Jesus was his Son, were killed or driven from the civilized world as heretics, and many surviving their persecutions took refuge among the nations called barbarians. And these nations were later conquered as heretics. The church lost its purity of morals, as well as purity of doctrine and enthusiastic faith. When the hordes of Mohammed hurled themselves against the peoples of Christendom, adding to the

power of the sword the force of the theological truth, "There is one God," the so-called Christians could not reply with the inspiring and overcoming cry that Jesus was the Son of God: for they had transformed the doctrine of the *Son of God* into the doctrine of *God the Son*; and the Mohammedan with unvarying sneer accused the Christian of having three Gods. With added contempt he also pointed to the pictures of the three, abounding in the churches, and with ample cause derided the superstitious idolatry of the magnificent cathedrals, when contrasted with the strict freedom from picture worship and image worship which characterized the mosques of Islam.

All know the sad history: how Mohammedanism conquered southwestern and southeastern Europe, all of northern Africa, and even western Asia, the very land where Jesus had been crucified and the "seven

churches” had received the messages from him. The “dark ages” came on.

We do not stop to describe the corruption of Christendom, which became a genuine heathenism with a veneer of Christian names. But it was a long time before the invention of printing, the discovery of America, and the springing up of light and liberty in Germany, France, and Anglo-Saxon lands.

But when light and liberty again began to shine, it was discovered that the corruptionists of the true doctrine of the unity of God had laid their hands on the Word itself, had forged Scripture, in support of the doctrine of the trinity, and published it widely as genuine Bible. They had done this by tampering with the manuscripts, or by false translation.

To point out some of these forgeries, and the doctrinal and moral bearings of the forgeries, is the purpose of this book; in the

hope that it may remove confusion from the minds of some believers, and thus strengthen their faith in God.

The present generation is not responsible for the forgeries, except in very small degree, as will be pointed out. Nor were the great masses of Christians ever responsible. But yet those who try to direct the theology of Christendom still teach the doctrine which the forgeries support, and also instil it in the minds of the young, not only by their catechisms, but by the hymns which they thrust before our eyes, like Heber's —

“Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!

Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;

Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!

God in three persons, blessed Trinity!”

Even children are indoctrinated, before they reach years of reasoning on such subjects. We take up the work entitled “The Praises of Jesus: A Hymn-book for Chil-

dren," and we read the following profane poetry: —

“O see, within a creature’s hand
The vast Creator deigns to be,
Reposing, infant-like, as though
On Joseph’s arm, or Mary’s knee.”

And these teachers take still greater liberties. We enter an “international” convention, and the worshipers are asked to sing of the death of God, as follows: —

“Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God:
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.”

Such hymns, speaking of the infancy, death, and blood of God, are not based on the true Scriptures, but on forgeries; some of which we will now consider.

I JOHN 5:7

This passage is quoted to establish and prove the doctrine of the trinity as taught in the creeds, almost as much as any other one in the "King James" Bible: —

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

It is not necessary for me now to prove that this passage is a forgery, for it is omitted from the new translation, both by the English Committee and the American Committee, without any outcry of theologians.

In fact, they have known for many years that it was not Scripture, in any sacred sense. Yet the British Bible Society has constantly printed it. The American Bible Society appeals for funds on the ground

that it has for a hundred years been printing the Bible without note or comment, and giving away very many copies; and in this it has done an inestimable amount of good, and unquestionably must be supported.

But the printing of this passage, as if it were genuine Scripture, is far more objectionable than making a comment in an open and honest way. For the excuse given for the original insertion of this passage in the text is, that some copyist wrote it in the margin as a comment, and the man who copied *that* manuscript mistook it for omitted matter, and copied the comment into the text. And so it appeared in one lonely manuscript (one manuscript out of one hundred and thirteen).

But for the Bible Society to print it many years after it was known not to be the writing of John is an immoral action; however glibly the excuse may be given that it was the reproduction of King James's

translation. It ceased to be the comment on Scripture, and was put forth as Scripture. It has been so quoted, again and again. There has been no excuse for printing it as Scripture since Sir Isaac Newton wrote his treatise exposing the forgery.

The printing of this passage all these years in the text of the Bible has led some readers to forge unconsciously. For instance, we have heard it quoted as if the last clause read: "And these three are one God." Thus the Bible Society has led men to another forgery, often unconsciously committed, to clinch the doctrine supposed to be taught by the forged passage.

* * * * *

Some reader may here say that we are using disagreeable language; that the very title of this book is offensive. This would be important if there were no justification. But when we consider how, even in modern

times, the doctrine of the trinity got into the creeds, we feel that we are justified in using exact language. The following is trinitarian evidence concerning the creed phrasing of the trinity, which we quote from Storr and Flatt's "Biblical Theology" (second edition), page 301, note: —

"On the words *persona*," etc. . . . "Much was said, about the time of the Reformation, concerning the tendency of these terms to lead to tritheism; and among the advocates for their expulsion from theological disquisition might be mentioned a number of the first divines of the age, not excepting Hunnius and even Luther himself. — Yet, to prevent the charge of Arianism or Socinianism, which he knew his enemies would eagerly seize the least pretext to prefer against them, Luther yielded to Melancthon's wishes, and in the Augsburg Confession the doctrine of the trinity is couched in the old scholastic terms."

That is, as the Roman Catholics had taught it. This is clear trinitarian evidence that Luther and the other "reformers" did not put the trinity into the creed because they believed it to be true, but to escape the "charge of Arianism, or Socinianism." It proves a sense of unreality or untruth,

pertaining to the trinity, on the part of those first responsible for it in modern creeds. And dogmatists inheriting from their theological ancestors a doctrine thus established should not be tender.

Turn to another "confession" and "catechism," and we read, "There be three persons in the Godhead." Join this to God's first commandment, and see how it reads: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," but "there be three persons in the Godhead." Is not this offensive to the "one God," whom Jesus calls "the only true God"? Is it not the very doctrine to be called tritheism?

PHILIPPIANS 2: 5-6

All the way along there has been an underlying consciousness that the Bible taught with emphasis the doctrine of one supreme, unequaled, unrivaled deity; and hence there has been an effort in some way to refute that truth, while professing to admit it. The trinitarian translators even went so far as to issue the following as Scripture: —

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.”

The forgery has been exposed by the American Committee's translation, as follows: —

“Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus : who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped.”

The reader easily observes that the former translators reversed the meaning of Paul. That is, Jesus *did* think it would be robbery to claim to be equal to God; although he was in the form of God.

Observe also how the forgery robs Jesus of his true glory that Paul was attributing to him. Paul teaches, that though Jesus was in the form of God, he was not so vain or ambitious as to grasp equality with God; but he rather humbled himself, and took the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men. That is, when God commanded him to empty himself of his heavenly majesty and divine power, to empty himself (in fact) of the "form of God," and to take "the form of a servant," he did not rebel, trying to grasp equality with God; but obeyed and took the form of a servant, and became in fashion as a man.

And Paul wishes us to have that same disposition: willingness to humble ourselves,

notwithstanding our greatness. "Have this mind in you."

How the force of the lesson is lost by the forgery! The passage becomes one used to teach that somebody in heaven considered it his right to be equal with God, but waived that right in his great condescension; thus attributing vanity to Jesus instead of humility.

See, however, how beautiful the conduct of Jesus appears, in the light of Paul's views about him.

The passage teaches that Paul believed Jesus to have "existed in the form of God," before he came into the world. This agrees with the writer of Hebrews (1: 3) who says of him: —

"Who being the effulgence of his (God's) glory, and the very image of his substance."

Not only was this magnificent Son of God the "image of the invisible God" (Col.

1: 15), before he came into the world, but he was so great that Paul and other Scripture writers represented him to have been the executive agent of God in the creation of the universe. Read the following passages descriptive of his transcendent pre-eminence: —

“The Son of his love, in whom we have our redemption, . . . who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation” (Col. 1: 13-15).

This “Son” is then not some one who was eternal, but some one who was “born.” But he was the *first* born; and first born of all creation. And that carries us back to a time long before the birth at Bethlehem.

There is thus right here a clear distinction that militates against “equality” as a right of the “Son.” For God, the Father, was never born. It could not be said of him that he was the “first born of all creation.” But Jesus *was* the first born. Then how

natural that he would not for a moment think “equality with God” was to be grasped. He had no such “mind.” . . . But read on: —

“The first born of all creation; for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist” (Col. 1: 15-17).

Now turn back to Philippians 2:6 to see the emphasis for the moral lesson: Here was this tremendous being, this Son of God, the first born of all creation, who was before all things, who created all things, and for whom all things were created, and who is the explanation of all things (“by whom all things consist”)—here was this tremendous being commanded to empty himself of the “form of God,” the “image of the invisible God,” and to take the form of a servant, and he obeyed. Paul says: —

“Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself.”

That is, he went still further. Even though found in fashion as a man he needed not have died: for he was not a man; being only the “Son of man.” (How different from the theology of the forgers, who claim that he became “very man”!) But “being found in *fashion* as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore God also highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow.”

But how could God “highly exalt” an infinite God?

Jesus was the Son of God, and he became the Son of man, and he was obedient all the

way along; counting not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, notwithstanding his wonderful greatness.

This heavenly Son of God is worshiped by men and angels. He created all things. In him all fulness dwells. He has often been called God. But the lesson of Philip-
pians 2: 6 is not that he is equal with God; but that his mind is right, his character is sound. It is a lesson similar to that of Hebrews 1: 8-9, where we read that —

“Of the Son (God saith)

Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever;
And the scepter of uprightness is the
scepter of thy kingdom.

Thou hast loved righteousness and hated
iniquity;

Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed
thee

With the oil of gladness above thy
fellows.”

Here it is easy to see that this great Son has a God who exalts him, “anoints him above his fellows,” even while he calls him God.

It was no “very man” who was called *God* by God; and it was no person equal with God whom God “anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows.”

But it was Jesus, the Son of God; so beautiful in character, that when a young man came running and kneeling to him, saying, “Good teacher,” in his meekness he exclaimed, “Why callest thou me good? None is good save one, God.”

He never claimed to be “equal with God”; but said, “My Father is greater than I.”

They who make him equal with God add not to his glory; but they manufacture a deity to set over against the one who says, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” They even say, There is a God the Son, and forge Scripture to make people believe it. They do not have the mind of “Christ Jesus, who existing in the form of God counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped.”

JOHN 10: 33

They who are not satisfied with one infinite person for God, but want some more, are not only unfair to him, but to his chosen people, and they capitalize and translate as follows: —

“The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.”

If the translators had made the last clause read, “makest thyself a god,” they would have made the argument of Jesus, by which he replied to the Jews, far more intelligible: for the historian goes on thus: —

“Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), say ye

of him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am (the) Son of God?"

There was nothing in the original Greek to cause the translators to make the Jews say that Jesus "made himself God." All that the Jews charged was that he made himself a god. And the reply of Jesus suits this charge. He quotes the Scripture to show that even Bible readers were in the Bible called gods. Then how foolish for the Jews (he argues) to say that he blasphemed, when all that he had said was that he was "*a son of the God.*"

But the translators, by using the capital letter to the word *god*, try to make the reader believe that the Jews understood Jesus to claim to be the infinite God. If they had so understood him, the quotation from the Old Testament which Jesus makes, showing that God's people were called *gods*, would have no suitable bearing. But the

point Jesus made was this: The Scripture calls them to whom the word of God came by the word *gods*. Therefore, although my claim to being the Son of God makes me divine, makes me a god, it is no more than the Scriptures justify: for my Father sanctified me, and sent me into the world, and I am "a son of the God."

Now what must be thought of the Bible weakness of a doctrine that will not only cause its adherents to forge a whole passage of Scripture, as in the case of 1 John 5: 7, but will by the use of a capital letter put an unnecessarily silly idea into the mouths of Jesus' enemies?

And what a source that is, to which to go for argument: to Jews! to Jews when about to stone Jesus! and, even then, to be compelled to change what the Jews said, by forging a capital letter on them!!!

Especially offensive does this forgery become, in view of Jesus' modest claim of

sonship toward God, with which he replies to his enemies.

Thus to turn aside from Jesus' own explanation, and to forge for his enemies, shows not only weakness of argument, but willingness to be with the enemies.

But those who consider Christ to be the infinite God, or believe that there is more than one infinite God, may refer to the argument of the Jews in John 5: 18, translated thus: —

“For this cause therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only brake the sabbath, but also called God his own Father, making himself equal with God.”

This argument *of the Jews* against Jesus is used now by trinitarians to refute his true Sonship, although Jesus replies to the Jews, antagonizing such argument as they made against him. But Jesus did not claim to be “equal with God,” the very point claimed by trinitarians: for Jesus said

to the Jews immediately (John 5:19), "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father doing."

Thus Jesus *disclaims equality* with his Father, although trinitarians insist that the Jews were right in arguing that his claim to being the Son of God implied that he was equal with God.

But for one person to claim to be the son of another person does *not* necessarily imply that he is equal to him. Therefore Jesus' claim to being the Son of God did not necessarily indicate that he claimed to be equal with God; especially in view of his immediate statement that he could do only the things he saw his Father doing.

Then the inquirer urges: But the Jews said he "made himself equal with God."

No; they did not. Taking the connection and the circumstances into consideration, we must again say that this word *equal*,

thrust before our eyes in the English translation, is so strong a word for the original Greek, that it exaggerates the meaning of the Jews even to the moral offensiveness of forgery. That is, the translators have given a meaning to the Greek word *ἰσος* (*isos*) which is stronger than the word necessarily indicates, even though Jesus had not informed the Jews of the inequality between him and God. For *ἰσος* may mean only *like*, or *similar to*, or *agreeing with*. In the King James translation (including two cases where this dogma is in dispute) the word is translated *equal* four times, *agree* twice, *as much* once, and *like* once. Now if in the two cases of this disputed dogma it had been translated *like*, which no one can deny would have been a true translation, conveying no possible error, the record would have been this: *Equal* twice; *agree* once; *as much* once; *like* three times.

We can easily see, then, what a strain it

is to force the word *equal* into the mouths of the Jews. What they argued was that Jesus, by making himself the Son of God, made himself *like* God. This was a very natural idea, familiar to human thought. And Jesus' reply fits it well: Though the Son is like God, he "can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father doing: for what things soever he doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth."

It is absolutely certain that the Jews did not understand Jesus either to claim to be God, or to be equal with God; for when they later had arrested him, and were trying him for his life, they never once brought the charge against him that he claimed to be God, or to be equal with God. But they would have brought that charge against him if they had so understood his claims. But they did charge him with claiming Son-

ship to God; and the high priest asked him directly (Matt. 26: 63), "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou art the Christ, the Son of God." When Jesus admitted his claim to Sonship, they immediately adjudged him guilty of blasphemy. But of how much greater blasphemy would they have considered him guilty if they had ever understood him to claim to be God, or to be equal with God! Such a thought does not appear to have come into the trial at all.

And when he was on the cross, and they were deriding him, they did not once suggest that he claimed to be God, or to be equal with God, but they said (Matt. 27:40), "If thou art the Son of God, come down from the cross"; and the chief priests, scribes, elders, and the malefactor said (Matt. 27:41-44), "He trusted on God; let him deliver him now, if he desireth him: for he said, I am the Son of God."

Not one of all his enemies in that time of accusations mentioned any claim of his to being God; that was reserved for trinitarians of later ages, who have resorted to the device of mistranslating Scripture to make it appear that the Jews thought he had made such a claim.

What, then, must be the poisonous nature of the trinitarian doctrine, that will not only make its advocates seize on the arguments of the Jews against the Saviour, but even so translate Scripture as to make those arguments more offensive than the Jews themselves made them. Verily, the doctrine has a black nature.

In speaking of its black nature, we do not confine ourselves exclusively to its intensifying of the Jewish attack on Jesus, of which we have just spoken; but it leads to grossly irreverent words and thoughts concerning the infinite God. It is well known that millions of trinitarians logically call

the Virgin Mary the "Mother of God." It is an idea absolutely necessary to true belief in the doctrine. Then read the following quotation, which we take from a trinitarian catechism: —

"The great God to become a man; the Father of eternity a *creature*; the Ancient of Days an infant; the Holy One of Israel to assume the likeness of sinful flesh; God blessed forever made a curse for us."

ACTS 7: 59

“And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”

The forgery is confessed by the action of the revisers, in the greater honesty of the present generation, whose translation is the following: —

“And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *the Lord*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”

This last is not forgery, although the words *the Lord* are not in the original. But it would have been a still fairer translation, to have made it read, *They stoned Stephen, calling upon, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.*

Did the reader ever notice how like Jesus Christ this Stephen was in his death?

Stephen said, “Lord, lay not this sin to

their charge.” Jesus said, “Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do.”

Stephen said, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Jesus said, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.”

But these resemblances do not make Stephen equal with Jesus. No more do the resemblances between Jesus and God make Jesus equal with God.

By the way, if the trinity be true, when Jesus commended his spirit to the Father, since the trinity represents the Son as equal to the Father, he must have been commending a “Spirit” to the Father fully equal to the “Spirit” of the Father; which would make four equal persons in the tri-personal trinity.

This argument (on the logic of the trinity) appears in a recent western book. I will later use one or two more of its points.

But let us resume the consideration of the trinitarian forgeries of Scripture.

ACTS 20: 28

“Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”

The American Committee boldly rejects the two words *of God*, and translates as follows: —

“Feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood.”

It is evident that they shrunk from the logical consequences of the doctrine of the trinity, which slays one of its Gods, “God the Son.” But yet their attachment to the doctrine led them to place the following matter in the margin:

“Some ancient authorities, including the two oldest manuscripts, read *God*.”

This is hardly candid, however, for neither one of the two is of an earlier period

than the fourth century: or, for the sake of making the point clear, we might say, There is no manuscript containing the phrase *of God* in this passage, earlier than the time when the trinity was agitated. Also, we call attention to the fact that no church father, prior to that time, quotes the words "*of God.*"

What a doctrine it must be that perverts the intellect of Godly men, men who love their Saviour, until it makes them kill one of their Gods, and forge Scripture to show that he had shed his own blood. It is a bloody doctrine, also, not only in killing its God, for it shed the blood of thousands of the followers of Christ, who in the early ages would not accept it.

Under the pretext of exalting the Son to an equality with the Father, it humbles God, even to the death of the cross.

JOHN 5: 23

“That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.”

This language is a part of the discourse of Jesus in controversy with the Jews; and the whole sentence is translated by the American Committee as follows: —

“For neither doth the Father judge any man, but he hath given all judgment unto the Son; that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.”

The first part of the sentence, the Father being the giver, clearly reveals the inequality between the Father and the Son; but the trinitarian usually quotes the latter part of the sentence by itself, as though the Saviour meant that the worship given the Son was to be mathematically equal to the worship given to the Father. And this mathematical theology is based on the phrase “even as.”

This phrase, "even as," is the translation of the Greek word *καθώς* (*kathos*), which really signifies *as*. Etymologically it cannot signify as much as a strong *as* (*ὥς*): for the preposition *κατα*, or *καθ'*, (*kata*), tones down the adverb; making it *according to* an *as*; that is, feebly *as*; or, *somewhat as*. And to justify making it mean a fully mathematical *even as*, we should need to find it so used by the New Testament writers.

But that is not its prevailing translation. It occurs more than one hundred and eighty times. It is translated *as* one hundred and thirty-seven times; *even as*, thirty-seven times; *according as*, four times; *when*, one time; *according to*, one time; and *how*, one time.

And of those thirty-seven passages in which it is translated "even as," there is not one where the word *as* alone would not have conveyed to the English reader the

meaning of the Greek writer, unless we except the following: —

“And the glory which thou hast given me I have given unto them; that they may be one, even as we (are) one” (John 17: 22).

This is in the prayer of Jesus to his Father, about his disciples. But will any serious reader contend that Jesus meant that he hoped for his disciples to be one, in any mathematical sense, or except *as* he and the Father were one?

Then turn back to John 5: 23, and interpret: We are to honor the Son *as* we honor the Father; that is, with a divine reverence; with a religious worship. The Son is of the nature of his Father, and must be so honored. We honor the Son, not merely as the founder of a new theology, nor as a miracle worker, nor as an orator whom multitudes heard with wonder; but as one with whom are the issues of life and death, to whom God hath given the author-

ity of judgment, and of calling the dead from the tombs. So that we are to give the same kind of honor to him as to the Father.

But to teach that Jesus was equal to the Father would shock Jesus: for in ancient times, when in controversy with the Jews, he exclaimed, "My Father, who hath given unto me, is greater than all" (John 10:29).

JOHN 1:1

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

How coarse the forgery is in this case will be plain, when we give the following absolutely literal translation: —

“In (a) beginning was the word, and the word was with the God, and the word was (a) god.”

That is, the word was divine, a divine being, with him who is properly called *the* God.

We call the popular translation a coarse forgery, because it is forever compelling trinitarians to explain how the Word could possibly be with God, while literally being *the* God himself. The difficulty cannot be escaped: for John in the very next verse, as if wishing to anticipate the trinitarian

contention, says, "The same was in (a) beginning with the God." How could the Word be the God and be *with* the God?

What John really said is easy to understand: That the Word in the indefinite past was a divine being, with the supreme God. Jesus himself was divine, and could be called a god, in the secondary sense.

In the age when John wrote, the word *θεός* (*theos*, god), was applied to beings considered deities, and even to lesser beings sometimes; as in the case quoted by Jesus (John 10:35), "He called them gods unto whom the word of *the* God came."

And John (according to the text of Westcott and Hort) again in the first chapter emphasizes his use of the word *θεός* (*theos*, god) in the secondary sense; saying (verse 18), "(An) only begotten god, he being in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared (him)." That is, the only begotten divine being, the Son of God, the only begotten

Son of God, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared the Father.

But the forgery in John 1:1 compels us to believe that the Word (Jesus) was with the supreme God, and was himself the supreme God; making John write nonsense. And this forgery is accomplished by the improper use of the capital letter in the English, and the ignoring of the use by John of the Greek article, which would in this case have shown the English reader that he was making a distinction between two beings, one of whom was *the* God, and the other a being also divine.

For the Greek word *θεὸς* (*theos*, god) is generic; applying, in the age in which John wrote, to very many beings, all of whom, however, as we now know through divine revelation, were false *θεοί* (*theoi*, plural form, Gods, or gods) except God and his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. And this fact is alluded to by Paul in 1 Cor. 8: 4-6: —

“There is no God but one. For though there be that are called gods (theoi), whether in heaven or on earth; as there are gods (theoi) many, and lords (kurioi) many; yet to us there is one God (theos), the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord (kurios) Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him.”

The distinction intended and secured by John between the two beings, each of whom in John 1:1 he calls *θεος* (*theos*, God, or god), is alluded to by Winer in his “New Testament Grammar,” page 122, in the following language:—

“In John 1:1 *θεὸς ᾧν ὁ λόγος* the article could not have been omitted if John had intended to designate the *λόγος* as *ὁ θεός*, because in this connection *θεός* alone would be ambiguous. But that John designedly wrote *θεός* is apparent, partly from the distinct antithesis *πρὸς τὸν θεόν* verses 1, 2, and partly from the whole description of the *λόγος*.”

How shabby must then be considered that device that would not only conceal the

distinction John intended by the use of the Greek article (seeing that he could not in his day make the sense distinction by the use of capitals and small letters), but must in the English Bible use our capital letter to mislead the reader. It is a clear case of forgery in translation.

But the moral bearing or significance of the act is not as great as the reader might at first suppose; seeing that the persons who committed the forgery had been trained to believe that there were three persons, each of whom was the infinite God, and yet there was but one infinite God.

Persons who have been trained to believe such an equation as $3=1$ must consider theology a very mysterious science. And theologians of the trinitarian kind are always insisting on the mystery of the trinity, that it cannot be understood by the human mind; obscuring from their hearers and themselves that it is not a matter of mystery

at all, but a matter of contradiction; that is, to teach that there are three persons, each of whom is infinitely God, is not mystery at all, but plain contradiction.

I TIMOTHY 3: 16

The trinitarian, bewildered by the objections to his contradictions, desires that they be considered mysteries, and impressively insists that we cannot understand all the mysteries of nature, nor practical life; and hurls at us the following: —

“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”

This is hurled at us, as if the great mystery were how God could be in flesh, and received up into glory; with all that is implied: temptation, crucifixion, death, resurrection, and ascension.

But the mystery Paul speaks of to Timothy is not the mystery of the trinity, nor the mystery of the Godhead, but the mystery

of godliness; that is, the mystery of a good life, such as Jesus, the Son of God, lived. This appears from the New Translation, as given by the American Committee, as follows: —

“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness;

He who was manifest in the flesh,
Justified in the spirit,
Seen of angels,
Preached among the nations,
Believed on in the world,
Received up in glory.”

The recent translators have been honest enough to put the following language in the margin, which stamps the King James translation as a forgery: —

“The word *God*, in place of *He who*, rests on no sufficient ancient evidence. Some ancient authorities read *which*.”

It is then evident that the former translators wished to make the readers of the

Bible believe that the great mystery was the mystery, not of a godly life, but of the Godhead, and that they forged the statement that God was manifest in the flesh. This would indeed have been a wonderful mystery; because men have never heard the voice of God at any time, nor seen his shape. It was the Son of God whose voice the people heard gladly, and whose flesh was nailed to the cross.

Ah! the Jews in ancient times crucified the Son of God, deriding him on the cross, saying (John 19:7), "He made himself the Son of God." And the trinitarian in modern times abolishes the Son of God and crucifies God the Son.

But Paul was not speaking of the mystery of the Godhead, but the mystery of godliness, that life which he lived, who was manifest in the flesh, the Son of God, who said after his resurrection from the dead, "Handle me and see: for a spirit hath not

flesh and bones, as ye see me having." He would not have advised them to handle God. In fact, he was so reverent toward his Father, that he said, with reference to his own life, "I have right to lay it down, and I have right to take it again. This commandment received I from my Father."

Trinitarians in trying to make the mystery one referring to the Godhead, instead of one referring to the good life which was manifest in Jesus' career, do violence to the purpose of Paul, who had said that he was writing to Timothy (verse 15) that he might "know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God." Thus we lose the emphasis of Paul on the life of Christ, on Christ as our example, and on the difficulty, the mystery of living that life; and we are led to believe that the great mystery is in the trinity. There is no mystery in the trinity; it is not true. But there

is great mystery in living such a life as Jesus lived: for it depends on birth, the life principle, in which there is something beyond the grasp of man, as Jesus said: "The Spirit breatheth where it will, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

The mystery of the godly life, godliness, is the mystery of life itself; which we find in the man born of God, and in the child born of man; which we find in the rose with its perfume, the lark with its song, and the apple tree with its fruit. It is everywhere in the life with which God girdles the world, and especially in the life that is "hid with Christ in God."

How culpable are those men who turned our investigations away from the practical mystery of daily living in Christ, to a declaration that God exhibited himself in a body!

Thus have they made void the law of

God, not merely by their tradition, but by forgery, to establish a doctrine that humiliated God, under the pretense of honoring Jesus.

It would have been far better to join with John who said, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared (him)." Jesus manifests godliness to us, and he declares God to us. Even when he prays to his Father, in the presence of his disciples, to whom he had said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father, believe me, I am in the Father and the Father in me," he says, "This is life eternal, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Jesus thus declares his Father to be the "true God"; and to know him is life. To forge Scripture, however, is not life; it is not godliness.

And in this case (1 Tim. 3:16) the for-

gery is made more offensive than it would otherwise be, by the fact that in the only manuscript having the appearance of justifying the insertion of the word *God*, the letter omicron (O) has a bar across it in evidently blacker ink than the elliptical line around, thus turning the letter into a theta (θ), the first letter of the Greek word $\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ (*theos*, God, or god); and the manuscript word was thus turned from $\omicron\varsigma$ ($[b]os$, who, or he who) to $\theta\varsigma$; and this was set forth as an abbreviation of $\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$; as in English, Dr. of *doctor*. This marred manuscript was used by the translators to justify the insertion of the word *God* in the English.

By such processes aid has been given to the perpetuating of the doctrine of the trinity in modern times, when it could be no longer forced on the nations by the sword of a Roman emperor.

But we do not regard such ways of perpetuating the doctrine as right. How weak

must be the real argument for it, when its believers have resorted to such doubtful methods! Yet this passage as forged has been quoted by generations of clergymen that knew better. We rejoice that the honesty of the revisers, both English and American, has compelled them to correct the forgery, so far as their English is concerned.

COLOSSIANS 2:9

“For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.”

Paul, the writer, refers to Christ.

The force of this passage in support of the trinity depends on the capitalization of the word *Godhead*. If it were printed *godhead*, it would only signify that Jesus was a divine being, possessed of the nature of his Father even though subordinate, and that he brought that divine nature with him from heaven, though he dwelt in a body; that is, he was fully divine, though in a body. If it had been translated “fulness of divinity” it would have been somewhat plainer.

But seeing that in the original, in the age when Paul wrote, the later distinction of meaning between capitals and small let-

ters was not emphasized, and that the original word here translated *Godhead* occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, the translators boldly used the capital letter; which enables them to argue for “*the essential Godhead of each of the Three Persons in the Trinity*” (as Trench words it).

Then we turn to the statement of Paul itself, to discover whether the capital letter, suggesting trinity in our English, can properly be retained, even according to the trinitarian meaning. If not, the trinitarian must be accused of having committed a forgery, even against himself, as in John 1:1.

The Presbyterian creed says: —

“In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.”

The Methodist creed says: —

“In unity of this Godhead there are three persons.”

Now we ask the trinitarian, Was Paul's statement true, with that capital letter? That is, Did the "fulness of *three* persons" dwell in Christ bodily?

No; you know that Christ was one person. According to your own doctrine, he was exclusively God *the Son* bodily; and the fulness of that divinity dwelt in him bodily. You do not believe that his body was the body of the Holy Ghost.

Then Colossians 2:9 should have been made to teach that in Christ when in the body dwelt the fulness of his divine nature; he was divine, though in flesh. He was filled with divinity. Everything about him spoke of the divine nature. Even his body had no human father, being begotten of the Holy Spirit. His body was divine, though a body. He was Son of God, and Son of man.

By such language as that in him dwelt all the fulness of divinity bodily, we do not

put contradictory doctrine into the writings of Paul, who distinctly used these words in Philippians 2: 5-7: —

“Christ Jesus: who, existing in form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men.”

Yet in this form of a servant, in this likeness of men, dwelt divinity. And Paul goes on to say, he “was found in fashion as a man.” But it is “fashion,” “likeness,” “form.” There dwelt in that body the fulness of divinity; but it was not the fulness of “three persons,” which the trinitarians all say are in the unity of the *Godhead*.

Then the trinitarians do violence to their own faith, when they forge the word *Godhead* on Paul in this place.

ROMANS 9: 5

“Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ *came*, who is over all, God blessed forevermore. Amen.”

The American Committee places the following in the margin, as a possible translation: —

“Whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh; he who is over all, God, be blessed for ever.”

If this marginal suggestion of the American Committee be justified, it is evident that the passage as it is usually printed is a misrepresentation of the words of Paul. That this charge of misrepresentation of Paul is a mild expression will appear plainly when we call attention to the fact that the common English of Romans 9: 5 is now frequently quoted as a proof text for the trinity; whereas, in ancient times, in the

ages when the so-called Christian world was in violent agitation on the doctrine, and before the Roman emperors had stamped out the insistence on the strict unity of the supreme God, this passage (Rom. 9: 5) was not quoted by any of the writers advocating the trinity. This was fact for centuries.

But it is inconceivable, if our common English is a correct translation of Rom. 9: 5, that the ancients would not have quoted it. But if the American Committee's marginal translation is a just rendering of Paul's Greek, there is no mystery about it. The ancients, who had the first manuscripts in their possession, knew that Paul made no reference to the trinity in the passage. For it is susceptible of the following literal translation, even if we accept the trinitarian pointing: —

“Whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, (a) god blessed unto the ages.”

That is, though Christ came in flesh, he was a divine being, blessed forever.

Then our English of Rom. 9: 5 is worse than a mistranslation.

But do you object to this second divine being?

Then how can you advocate three divine beings, each supreme?

Of the two divine beings that the unforged Bible sets before us, only one is supreme. He says to the subordinate one, his only begotten Son, "Sit thou at my right hand"; commanding, and the second obeys. The second says, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." When the second divine being prays (the supreme divine being never prays), he says, "Now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

* * * * *

What do trinitarians gain by the forgeries we have been considering? Do they want more than one God? No; they profess to have only one. Do they need more than one God? No; for one infinite God would have as much power, knowledge, and excellence as three. It would be just as easy to believe in three infinite spaces, or three infinite durations, as three infinite Gods; which is believing in three persons, each of whom is an infinite God, not to be confounded with another.

Do trinitarians wish to abolish the mediator between God and men? No; they love Jesus. But to make Jesus "God the Son," instead of the Son of God, to make him an infinite God, and the other part of his nature a "very man," destroys him as a being begotten of God: for the part called the "divine nature," being infinite, could not really have a father; and the part called the "human nature" could be nothing

more than man, "very man." This is what the Mohammedan has; what the Unitarian has. There is nothing in this doctrine showing us some being, in his nature between God and man.

The trinitarian loses or abolishes the being described in the following Scriptures:—

"In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was a divine being. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made" (John 1: 1-3);

"Who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation; for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist" (Col. 1: 15-17);

"The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God" (Rev. 3: 14);

"Son, whom he (God) appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds; who (the Son) being the effulgence of his (God's) glory, and the very image of his (God's) substance" (Heb. 1: 2-3);

"Christ Jesus, who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant" (Phil. 2: 5-7);

"When the fulness of time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law" (Gal. 4: 4);

"Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, . . . A body didst thou prepare for me; . . . Then, said I, Lo, I am come to do thy will, O God" (Heb. 10: 5-7);

"I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (John 6: 38);

"Being made in the likeness of men" (Phil. 2: 7);

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 1: 18);

"And" Christ Jesus "being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross" (Phil. 2: 8);

"The chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. He is the King of Israel; let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe on him. He trusted on God; let him deliver him now, if he desireth him: for he said, I am the Son of God" (Matt. 27: 41-44);

"Wherefore also God highly exalted him" (Phil. 2: 9),

"So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken unto them; was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God" (Mark 16: 19);

"When he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; having become by so much better than the angels, as he hath inherited a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he (God) at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee" (Heb. 1: 3-5);

"That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2: 10, 11);

"Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the

kingdom to God, even the Father. . . . And when all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15: 24, 28).

The career of Jesus Christ thus briefly outlined in the Scriptures, we who fully accept the true unity of the infinite God believe; but a trinitarian does not have any enthusiasm over this presentation of the Son of God, but wishes him set forth as God the Son, in exact equality with God the Father and God the Holy Ghost. But we, who believe in the true unity of the Supreme God, accept the Bible presentation of the life of Christ: for, with Paul, we believe these words: —

"To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him. Howbeit there is not in all men that knowledge" (1 Cor. 8: 6-7).

* * * * *

We now turn away from the forgeries

bearing on the relation of Jesus to his Father, and take up one case of forgery bearing on the nature of the Holy Spirit.

ROMANS 8: 16

Both the English Committee and the American Committee make the New Translation to read as follows: —

“The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God.”

This forgery is especially odious because the King James version reads correctly: —

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.”

That is, correctly as to the words *himself* and *itself*.

The New Translation directly forges the word *himself*. The King James translation was right: *itself*. For the word πνεύμα (*pneuma*, spirit) is always neuter in gender, in the Greek language; and every pronoun agreeing with it, and every adjective (for in Greek adjectives must agree with their nouns in gender), is in the neuter gender.

There is no exception. The word *πνεῦμα* (*pneuma*, spirit) occurs in the New Testament probably more than two hundred and fifty times. It is always neuter. Its adjectives are always neuter. Then why did the translators in Rom. 8: 16 use the masculine pronoun? The only answer must be that they wished to teach that the Holy Spirit was a person, equal to God the Father. But to do violence to the Greek, for such a purpose, makes the act a forgery, not a mistranslation.

But the reader may ask, Is there not some justification for supposing that the Spirit is really a person in itself? and may not that principle palliate the violence done the Greek by their use of the word *himself* in Romans 8: 16? Are there not some masculine pronouns in the New Testament that refer to the Holy Spirit by their meaning? And he quotes the following, which we place in the left-hand column, with a literal translation in the right: —

John 14:16-17. "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive."

John 14:26. "But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things."

John 15:26. "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness of me."

John 16:7-8. "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you. And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin."

"John 16:13-14. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth; for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that (he) may be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth: which the world cannot receive."

"But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things."

"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness of me."

"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you. And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin."

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, (he) shall guide you into all the truth: for (he) shall not speak from himself; but what things soever (he)

he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify me."

shall hear, (these) shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify me."

The confusion of the pronouns in these passages comes from the fact that the word incorrectly translated *Comforter*, παρακλητος (*parakletos*, near-caller) is in the masculine gender. As a matter of language the same gender had to be used in its pronouns. And there is justification, even in the sense, for this: for Jesus is speaking somewhat in symbols, and personifies the Holy Spirit repeatedly. And we do not charge the use of masculine pronouns in such passages with being forgery; for the original language authorizes such use in English. But for Jesus to personify the Holy Spirit does not make it theologically a person, a real person; *or else truth itself would become a person ; for it is "the spirit of truth" that is the near-caller, or "Comforter."*

It is evident that to teach that the Holy Spirit is a real person, because of the figurative language of Jesus in this one discourse (John 14, 15, 16), notwithstanding the hundreds of other references to the Holy Spirit, where it is in the neuter gender, is not justified.

Then see the difficulties that rise, if we accept the forgery, that “the Spirit *himself* beareth witness”: —

1. If the Spirit of God be a person in the Godhead (according to the creeds), equal to the Father, to be called by the unscriptural language *God the Holy Ghost*, we must allow him a Son, for the Father, “the first Person,” has a Son. Thus we have four persons in the Godhead, since this Son of the Holy Ghost must be fully equal to the Son of the first person.

2. But “God the Holy Ghost,” if equal to the first person, must have a Spirit also, equal to the Spirit of the first person, and

he must be a person; and we have five persons in the trinity.

3. The same argument must apply to the second person of the trinity, the so-called "God the Son"; that is, his Son and his Spirit must be fully equal to the Son and Spirit of the first person of the trinity, and we have two more persons, making seven persons in the trinitarian Godhead.

If it be urged that this is quibbling, and without moral bearing, we call attention immediately to the fact that if it really be insisted that the Holy Spirit is a person, and fully equal to the Father, we are compelled to abandon the claim that Christianity is reasonable: on account of the confusion among the "persons" of the trinitarian Godhead. Read the following Scriptures, with the idea that the Holy Ghost is a person, *he*, *himself*, and equal to the "only true God," and observe how confusion among the "persons" results : —

“And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. . . . And Mary said unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God” (Luke 1: 30-35).

If the Holy Spirit be a person, it is plain that the Holy Ghost was the Father of Jesus; and we are absolutely compelled to disobey the great trinitarian (Athanasian) creed which says, “neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost.”

The origin of Jesus is equally plainly stated in Matthew, but in different language: —

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But when he thought on these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 1: 18–20).

From this statement of Matthew it is equally clear with the statement of Luke, that if the Holy Spirit be a person it (or *he*) is the Father of Jesus. Then God the Father could not be the Father of Jesus.

But now accept the Bible doctrine, and suppose the Holy Spirit not to be a person, and not to be of the masculine gender, but neuter, and bearing a somewhat analogous relation to God to that which the spirit of man bears to man, and this whole narrative is reasonable; there is no “confounding”

of the “persons” which the writers of the trinitarian creed forbade, although it is a logically necessary incident of the doctrine. We have a Son of God, by the energy of that same Spirit of God that in the beginning was “brooding upon the face of the waters,” when God said, “Let there be light.”

If we teach that the Holy Spirit is a person, we are not only subjected to the confusion of persons, in connection with the birth of the Son of God, but we are subjected to complications in connection with the second commandment of the decalogue, where we are forbidden, in worship, to make images or likenesses.

For at the baptism of Jesus, when there came a voice out of heaven (Matt. 3: 16-17) saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,” the Spirit of God descended as a dove (Luke 3: 22) “in a bodily form as a dove,” upon him. That is (if the Holy Spirit be a person, and also God),

God descended in the form of a dove upon the Son of God. And this scene is pictured in many family Bibles, — God the Holy Ghost descending in the form of a bird; subjecting those who teach the doctrine to the condemnation of Paul (Rom. 1: 22-23), “Professing themselves to be wise” (“orthodox”?), “they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds.”

Now, Brother Trinitarian, what do you do with the picture of your God the Holy Ghost, in your family Bible? Do you worship it? If you do not, are you reverent to the likeness of your God? If you do worship it, what will you do with the second commandment of the decalogue? . . . Do not gabble now of “orthodoxy.” Look at the baptismal scene: you have one God speaking from the heavens; you have another God coming up out of the water in

the form of a man; and you have another God descending from the skies in the form of a dove: *all at once*. How many infinite Gods have you?

And then one of your infinite Gods says of the second, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Why don't you forge some more Scripture, and make it read, in our English Bibles, *Lo, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This person who has been baptized, is God ; and I am well pleased with myself*. Or, you might have forged for the voice, that the dove descending was God the Holy Ghost. The audacity would have been no greater than that which in Romans 8: 16 makes Paul say, "The Spirit *himself*," when the Greek most positively says, "The Spirit *itself*."

Then we translate Romans 8: 16, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God." And we reject the forged word *himself*.

Let us make some practical observations:

Trinitarian brethren, you pose before the world as “orthodox,” you use the opprobrious term *heretics* with respect to those who differ from you on this subject, you consider yourselves the custodians of “evangelical” truth, and you talk and write as if the trinity were a settled doctrine. But you are in error not only in supposing it settled, but in supposing that you can permanently retain the respect of the masses, when they find out on what a false foundation the doctrine of the trinity rests. Searchers after truth will discover one by one the mistranslations as well as forgeries on which the trinity is based. (For there is no Roman sword to sustain it now.) These discoveries will destroy their respect for the leaders of Christian thought; either as to good sense or good morals. They will become skeptical as to the Scriptures, and the church will lose its hold on thinking communities.

For all must admit that such tremendous forgeries, some of which we have pointed out, can be explained only on the theory that the men who made the forgeries did not believe that the doctrine was plainly taught in the true Bible. The searcher after truth then concludes, further, that the custodians of "orthodoxy," at the times when the forgeries were made, lacked moral integrity. He easily transfers his judgment of the men who made the forgeries to the men who at the present time set forth the doctrine the forgeries support. But the masses of mankind will not always follow leaders in whose honesty they have no confidence. Hence, unless you acknowledge the forgeries, and disavow your responsibility for them, the church will lose the confidence of the public. All this implies that the visible church of the Lord Jesus Christ must be revolutionized as to doctrine.

For, as soon as you admit that the doctrine of the trinity is not taught in the Bible, and that the passages supposed to teach it most strongly are forgeries, the doctrine will be abandoned: for no one can seriously claim that it is taught by reason independently of the Bible.

Even now, some of the arguments and illustrations, which are offered to troubled inquirers, are so silly as to merit condemnation from the moral point of view.

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Trinitarian brethren, you have nothing to gain for the cause of Christ by adhering to the doctrine of the trinity. Why not return to the unity of God? You know that the trinity was not taught in the early church; it was forced on the world by Roman power. The early church taught with emphasis the unity of God. It gave the early missionaries power against polytheism. In the first creeds, the Nicene and the (so-called)

Apostles', "God the Holy Ghost" was not even mentioned. This proves that the early Christians had no conception of the doctrine as you now teach it.

You know that in the book of Revelation, though the worship of God and the Lamb is spoken of, there is no mention of the Holy Ghost as seen on the throne or elsewhere, nor of any third person as worshiped with divine or angelic approval. You know that "God the Holy Ghost," in all the Bible, is neither worshiped, nor spoken to, nor spoken of; as it would be were it a person, or had the writers of the Bible believed your doctrine.

Missionaries in some foreign lands now lament that they are competing only feebly with Mohammedans in peaceful preaching; that the Mohammedans have an advantage in teaching their faith, because they state so plainly the doctrine of one God; whereas the Christian missionaries are supposed to

teach three: "God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost." In the mission fields of India and in the forests of Africa you can hardly maintain yourselves in competition with Mohammedanism. And you hardly ever convert a Mohammedan, who despises your three Gods, with your images and pictures of your Gods. Your trinity is a load to carry, not laid on your shoulders by the Scriptures, where the first commandment is, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me"; and its wording in Deuteronomy is confirmed by the Saviour, "The Lord our God is one Lord."

Why not announce the trinitarian forgeries to the world (you did not make them), abandon the trinity, and go to the heathen with a God who is really one?

Your Bible societies have issued these forgeries by the million, and yet you stand for honesty and integrity. You build hospitals, found colleges, support missionaries,

and are the salt of the earth. You do a great part of the good work of the world. You are on the side of the great reforms. You preach conversion from sin, you love God, and you trust in Jesus Christ for salvation. Why can you not believe your Master when he says, "My Father is greater than I"? Your evasion of that statement of your Teacher is unworthy of your character. You say, He was then speaking in his human nature; he meant that the divine nature was greater than the human nature, almost making Jesus utter flatness; as if he would say that God was greater than a "very man," as you express it. Who did not know that?

By your doctrine of the trinity you dare not say that you have more Gods than one. Hence, what do you gain by three persons, each of them God? You have no greater a God than the Father, for he is infinite, and three infinities are no greater than one

infinite. You have no better a Saviour than the one in “the likeness of the Father’s glory and the express image of his person.” Your Saviour is great enough as the “only begotten Son of God”; for unto him had been given all authority “in heaven and earth.” At last, you know well he “will deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all.”

Why sin against the Holy Ghost by destroying its intimate relation to the Father, as his own Spirit, “breathed forth,” “poured out on all flesh,” “moving on the face of the waters,” and “bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God”?

Trinitarian brethren, you who are the heirs of the “orthodoxy” of these forgers of Scripture, you claim the proprietorship of the visible church; and yet you have never in a fully manly way in modern times set before the world the true unity of God. You cannot be the instruments to convert

the world from sin until you give emphasis to the commandment which God makes the first. In the first articles of your creeds to label and stamp your God as three, or triune, stamps you yourselves as insincere, and as contradicting God.

The greatest obstruction to the success of the gospel is not the opposition of known sinners and enemies, but the adulteration of the truth by those who profess to teach it. How can you inculcate financial honesty in trade when the first doctrine of your articles of religion in your creeds is that one is three? How can you teach humane treatment of human beings, when you teach that your God the Father slew another God, God the Son? and did it to satisfy the penalty of his own infinite law, which you say man was able to break, but not able to satisfy, and therefore God the Father slew God the Son; God the Son being infinite, and therefore able to pay the penalty?

How can you go to the people with a denunciation of lynch law, when your own infinite God slays another infinite God (or slays himself), innocent of sin? How can you teach respect for authority in the land, when you teach that your God the Father is thus unjust? How can you teach reverence for him as infinite, seeing that you teach that he gave a law that required an infinite penalty, and yet a finite being (man) could shatter?

And to what subterfuges you are made by this wicked doctrine to resort, to prove it! You will take the poor doubting, rebuked, convinced, astonished Thomas, uttering an exclamation of surprise to Jesus, "My Lord and my God," to prove that Jesus is the infinite God; although the reporter, John, who related the whole story, immediately explains as follows:—

"Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written

in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name" (John 20: 30-31).

That is, you take an event in the life of Thomas which the historian recorded to convince men that Jesus was the Son of God, to convince them that he was the infinite God. As if John had said, These are written that ye may believe that Jesus is God. . . . To forge argument is only a grade less dishonest than to forge Scripture.

Is it any wonder that you are, in your churches, losing that deep piety and strict morality which ought to permeate the church? Is it any wonder that you lament that your young men of high purpose and great ability do not press into the ministry? Is it any wonder that while you are trying to Christianize the heathen your own commerce is becoming depraved? that the church is gasping? that it is trying by

manipulation, by combination, in imitation of manufacturing "trusts" and doubtful business processes which it has no influence to correct, to retain or increase its mastery over the age?

The first law of God is that he is one; but you sustain forgeries to Scripture to prove your creeds that say that he is three. And yet you lament the paralysis of the church. You poison the river of life, by pouring into it the muddy waters of tritheism, which you drew from the sewers of polytheism, and yet you wonder that the people who are practical, who build, who toil, who make things, and who thus must in the very substance of their nature be true, do not drink the fouled stream. Why should they, as they see things? They will rather drink from wells of their own digging, even though they must dig in the swamps of sin.

Why this drag on the church? Why the

prevailing doubt? Why the fear that the day of revivals is past? Why the lame defense of the Bible against the destructive critics?

Why are so few Jews converted? why so few since the doctrine of the trinity became a doctrine of the visible church? In the first century the missionaries of the gospel, when they were in a heathen land, first went to the Jews. These were the first converts. The first missionaries themselves were Jewish converts. And those missionaries did not have to explain a "mysterious" doctrine, how in the "unity of the Godhead there were three persons, equal in power, glory, and eternity"; but they taught in simplicity that there was one God, and that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. They pointed to the prophets with confidence, and quoted, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," and, "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a

Son," never once teaching the doctrine revolting to the Jews that his God died on the cross. It was enough that the Son of God died there; even that to the Jew was a stumbling block. The missionary did not assume the burden of proving that Jehovah died; his proclamation was that Jesus was the Son of God, that he died on the cross, and that he rose from the dead.

Even as I write there comes to my table the periodical, "The Jewish Outlook," confirming the logic of what I say about your inability to convert the Jews, by these editorial words: —

"How long will our Christian friends delude themselves with the vain hope of converting Israel? What has Christianity to offer to the Jew? A more rational faith? A better system of ethics? A warmer domesticity? What indeed, except the discredited doctrines of evangelical theology, and the prospect of a house divided against itself? We are not assuming the role of counselors, but it seems to us that Christianity's first duty is to itself,

namely, to rid itself of the noxious growths of pagan superstitions, to unify itself and to return to the religion of Isaiah, the Jewish prophet, to universal and ethical monotheism."

The morality of the church at the present time is only what would be expected of respectability; and the effect on the world at large is demoralizing, and we might justly say to Christendom, —

Your abandonment of the first commandment leads to an annulment of the whole decalogue. Observe (1) Your theological seminaries teach such error that a novice would think the first commandment read this way: Thou shalt have no other Gods but us three; (2) Pictures of your Deity (crucified) are found in your Bibles, and his images abound in great churches, from whose bishops you profess to derive your apostolic succession; (3) So-called moral men vie with each other in the originality and picturesqueness of their profanity, and

an ordinary oath lends little weight to a statement; (4) Mighty railroads run their excursion and freight trains with shrieking whistles past the church buildings where villagers assemble for worship on the sabbath day; (5) The honor given by children to their parents is hardly equal to that of heathen lands; (6) You punish no one for killing hundreds, if the manslaughter has been done by a monopolistic corporation; (7) You sanctimoniously oppose divorce laws, but simultaneously cultivate adultery in your "best society," by costume, by hours, and by manners; (8) Your business frauds are so colossal as to be the wonder of the world; (9) Perjury of witnesses is so well understood a feature that cross-examination is your main reliance for truth in your courts of justice, where injustice is so common that honest lawyers admit that poor men had better not go to law; (10) Covetousness, "which is idolatry," has be-

come so common a vice that the phrase "Almighty Dollar" is written with capital letters, as though the dollar were really the Almighty One;

Having lost your "only true God," his commandments have become dimmed and vague. There is no concentration of worship, unless it be to the creature of your own hands; and there can be little true *zeal*, however much excitement may attend your coming to your altars and limping about them; and any true prophet Elijah calling you back to the worship of Jehovah would be considered a "troubler of Israel." In fact, Dowie, right in the midst of you, poses as Elijah, and you are at your wits' end how to resist him, although he is so unlike the real Elijah that he puts absolutely no emphasis on the identity and unity of the real God, but all his pressure on the healing of human bodies. What a contrast between the true Elijah and the product of

your demoralizing trinity! It is contrast between a chariot of fire and horses of fire with a whirlwind bearing a true prophet upward to the presence of his one God, and the stick of a human rocket descending to its own human level, after the advertising fireworks are consumed.

This unhealthy condition of Christendom is because the church, composed of the best people of the world, the conservative element everywhere, is sustaining a doctrine that is disapproved by the human intellect; it is trying to believe a lie. Deceit and fraud are a part of its theological life, and its practical life is diseased, as the natural effect.

And this deceit is so nearly paramount that we find it in most unexpected places. If a young minister is anxious about the trinity, he is solemnly advised not to question a settled dogma; that the Christian world has investigated the subject, and that

the vast majority have accepted the "orthodoxy" of the doctrine of the trinity. And it is studiously concealed from him that the doctrine was established by the sword, by persecution, by the most cruel oppression, until a church corrupted by statesmen became, in the civilized world, only an imitation of heathen religions, though using Christian names; while believers in the original Christianity fled to barbarous nations, which were later conquered by the sword as heretics. It is concealed from the anxious student that the church thus unified by persecution lost its converting power, its morality, and its spiritual influence, until "the Reformation" broke out; and that nearly all the Protestant denominations simply inherited the doctrine from this corrupted church; and thus the doctrine of the trinity was never freely established. It is concealed from the student that when Theodosius the Great, in the

latter part of the fourth century, made the trinity the official doctrine of the Roman Empire, there were not enough trinitarians in his capital, the city of Constantinople, on the first Sunday to place a single worshiper in each church building in the city.

The masses of the people ought to be interested in the subject. The Bible writers were interested in the doctrine of one God, and they insisted on it, even if the masses were not interested. God himself was interested to command it. The writers of confessions of faith have been interested enough to make the doctrine of the triune God, the trinity, one of the first articles in the creeds. Why should not men now be interested in the doctrine of God? It is the great doctrine of the universe.

Our Master said that "life eternal" was to "know the only true God," the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus came to show him to the world.

Only by preaching the one God can the heathen be converted, Mohammedans made Christian, and the Jews won to Christ. Christianity must go halting while its leaders confuse the common mind with the statement that three are one. As a historical fact, when the trinity with its crucified "human nature" of the "second person" of the Godhead was preached to the Peruvians, they supposed that Christians had *four* Gods.

Brethren, renounce the doctrine of the trinity. Teach in purity and with zeal that God is one. It is the doctrine that in your hearts you believe. When you pray, you pray to the Father, unless you pray theologically. The natural uplifting of your heart is to the Father. Thus you have learned the Lord's prayer, and you love it. The Son of God teaches you how to pray, and he prays with you, to his Father and

your Father, to his God and your God. And he asks his Father to “glorify him with the glory he had with his Father before the world was” (John 17: 5), even saying, “Glorify thy Son” (John 17: 1). But the Son cannot be glorified, the world cannot be converted, if the Scriptures are to be forged in order to perpetuate false doctrine.

God must be worshiped in spirit and in truth.

Trinitarian brethren, it is time to renounce the trinity. You usually worship, when you pray, God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Even your liturgies, that are intended to teach equality, do not practise it, for you put the Father first, saying, “God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.” Your efforts to have two other beings equal to God are no more successful than the poems of heathen Rome, where the three divided all things between them, Jupiter taking heaven, Nep-

tune the sea, and Pluto hell. You cannot make three equal Gods. Jesus, whom you love and honor, will not help you: for he says, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."

The Bible opens with the announcement of the creation of heaven and earth by God. The statement is put in such a way as to teach one God, whatever the form of the Hebrew word. It is evident that the writer wishes to do honor to the one God. The decalogue announces God to be alone God: "I am the Lord thy God"; "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." The great commandment states it thus: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." This is a form of the commandment never emphasized in any creed. Jesus enforced the commandment in this form: "The Lord our God, the Lord is one; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God"; and the Scribe

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acknowledged the correctness of the statement, saying, "Of a truth, Master, thou hast well said that he is one; and there is none other but he: and to love him . . . is much more than whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

In various parts of the Bible there are visions of God, but he is ever represented as purely one. Unspeakable glory may surround him, but he is always one. When Stephen sees Jesus standing on the right hand of God, God is seen as one. Heathen gods may be monsters, with various faces, different bodies, and separate persons, but the God of the Bible is always one.

The Bible opens with one God, and when the end cometh, then shall the Son himself be subject to him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all (1 Cor. 15:28). In heaven the greatest of all the commandments is not obsolete, and in the end of time the world will find that it is yet

the greatest. *There is no denomination* that does not treat the greatest and most beautiful of all the commandments, the one leading to all other excellence, as though it were obsolete. Until it is revived, Christendom must be only a veneered heathendom, and the church must appear in scarlet almost as much as in white.

Our Father,
Who Art in Heaven, Hallowed Be
Thy Name.

